

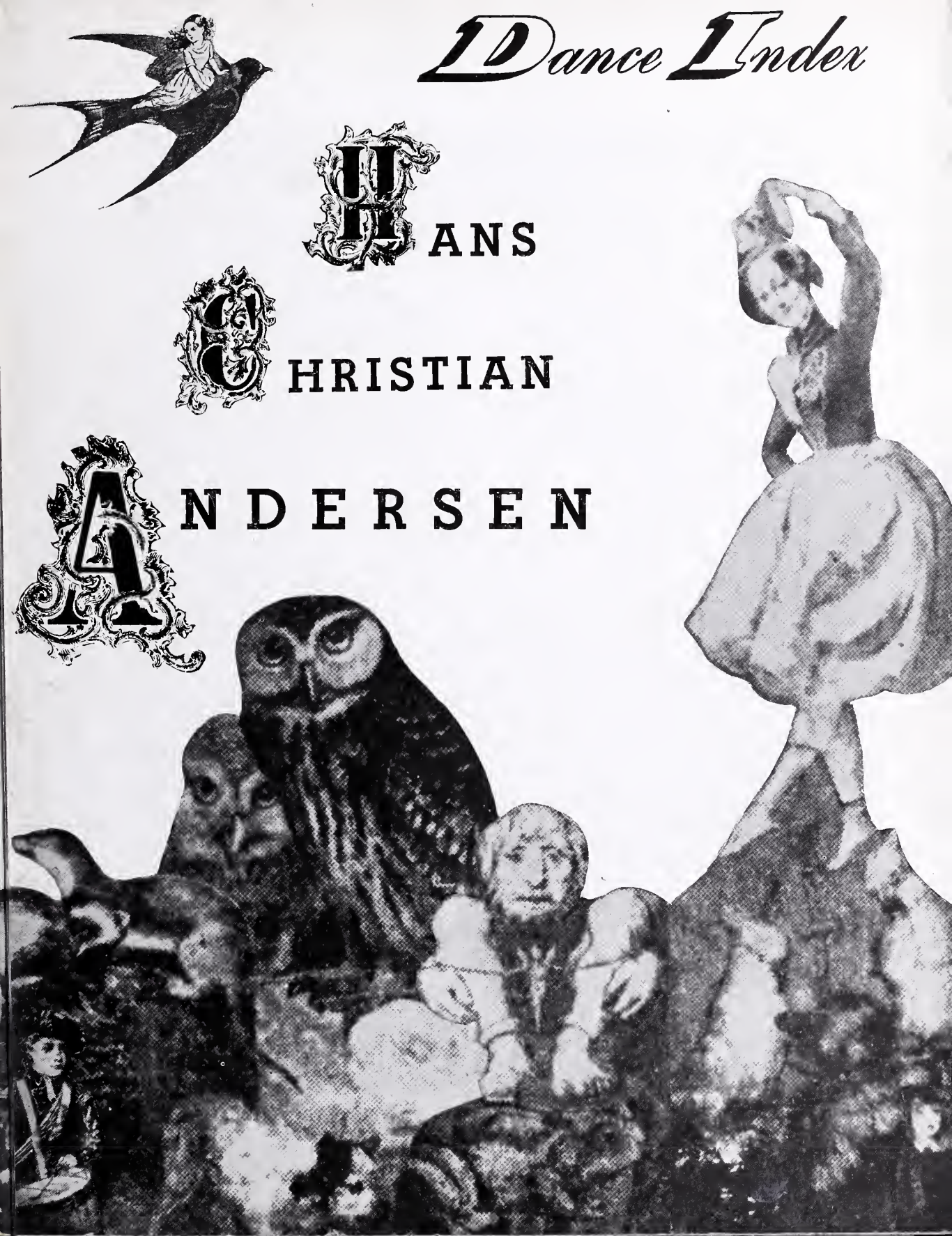
Dance Index



HRISTIAN



NDERSEN





Silhouette cut in paper by H. C. Andersen, from the Hans Andersen Museum.

Dance Index

Founders

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN
BAIRD HASTINGS
PAUL MAGRIEL

Editor

DONALD WINDHAM

Comment

In the Tales of Hans Christian Andersen one may take for granted their relationship to ballet,—with their release, their escape, their flight, their defiance of the limitations of a physical world; their amiability; the subtler sense of light and air—still without realizing how the spirit of the Romantic Ballet “stamped itself in its whole coloring upon his Psyche-wings.” A favor graciously acknowledged, for in what other instance than in the Tales do we see the Romantic Ballet transcending its esoteric limits to be perpetuated in the domain of enduring and universal literature.

The Anderseniana in this issue is less of a corroboration of this deep and abiding influence than it is the outgrowth of a few lines from his autobiography. In “The Story of My Life” there is one lone brief homage to a *danseuse* of the contemporary scene (page 146), a tribute, however, as tantalizing as it is full of lyrical beauty when subsequent search yields no further finds, the sort of treasure that another balletomane of the same era, Théophile Gautier, bequeathed to us with such prodigality. Whatever compensation in his works as could be found elsewhere evoking the King of Story Tellers against the golden age of ballet (the intriguing documentary aspect further enhanced) has been gathered up and is herewith presented (with an homage-ballet of

our own devising) in a manner not unlike the scrapbooks his nimble fingers delighted in fashioning for children. And little did these same huge hands dream they were creating in the paper silhouettes priceless pieces of collector’s varia—to enter a precious realm where the white baroque ballerinas invite a paperdoll Taglioni* in rainbow costumes to join in their dance to the envious gaze of tiny twin Ellslers* quivering in glass prisons.

The Constant Tin Soldier has been through more fiery trials, and the Little Match Girl more long cruel winters. Rejoicing with them in the liberation of the land that gave them birth we can better appreciate the imponderables of the Tales—to survive the terror and tragedy that have been their lot the past half decade. Perennial and universal as has been their appeal renewed acquaintance with them now becomes even more rewarding.

* * *

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the H. C. Andersen museum at Odense, Denmark, for the paper cut-outs, to the New York Public Library for the Andersen portrait, and to the Childrens’ Room of the same institution.

JOSEPH CORNELL

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* In the collection of the Dance Archives.

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"a troll H. Andersen" *

... Luck never comes alone, it always has company, and it did this time. Godfather gave up his dirt-cart and joined the theatre.

"For what in the world," said Grandmother," is he going to the theatre? What does he go as?"

As a machinist. That was a real getting on, and he was now quite another man, and took a wonderful deal of enjoyment in the comedy, which he always saw from the top or from the side. The most charming thing was the ballet, but that indeed gave him the hardest work, and there was always some danger from fire. They danced both in heaven and on earth. That was something for little Peer to see, and one evening when there was to be a dress rehearsal of a new ballet, in which they were all dressed and adorned as in the evening when people pay to see all the fine show, he had permission to bring Peer with him, and put him in a place where he could see the whole.

It was a Scripture ballet—Samson. The Philistines danced about him, and he tumbled the whole house down over them and himself; but there were fire-engines and firemen on hand in case of any accident.

Peer had never seen a comedy, still less a ballet. He put on his Sunday clothes and went with godfather to the theatre. It was just like a great drying-loft, with ever so many curtains and screens, great openings in the floor, lamps and lights. There was a host of nooks and crannies up and down, and people came out from these just as in a great church with its balcony pews. The floor went down quite steeply, and there Peer was placed, and told to stay there till it was all finished and he was sent for. He had three sandwiches in his pocket, so that he need not starve.

Soon it grew lighter and lighter: there came up in front just as if straight out of the earth, a number of musicians with both flutes and violins. At the side where Peer sat people came dressed as if they were in the street; but there came also knights with gold helmets, beautiful maidens in gauze and flowers, even angels all in white with wings on their backs. They were placed up and down, on the floor and up in the "balcony pews," to be looked at. They were the whole force of the ballet dancers; but Peer did not know that. He believed they belonged in the fairy tales his grandmother had told him about. Then there came a woman, who was the most beautiful of all, with a gold helmet and spear; she looked out over all the others and sat between an angel and an imp. Ah! how much there was to see, and yet the ballet was not even begun.

There was a moment of quiet. A man dressed in black moved a little fairy wand over all the musicians, and then they began to play, so that there was a whistling of music, and the wall itself began to rise. One looked out on to a flower-garden, where the sun shone, and all the people danced and leaped. Such a wonderful sight had Peer never imagined. There the soldiers marched, and there was fighting and there were the guilds and the mighty Samson with his love. But she was as wicked as she was beautiful: she betrayed him. The Philistines plucked his eyes out; he had to grind in the mill and be set up for mockery in the dancing hall; but then he laid hold of the strong pillars which held the roof up, and shook them and the whole house; it fell, and there burst forth wonderful flames of red and green fire.

Peer could have sat there his whole life long and looked on, even if the sandwiches were all eaten—and they were all eaten.

Now here was something to tell about when he got home. He was not to be got off to bed. He stood on one leg and laid the other upon the table—that was what Samson's love and all the other

* Or vice-versa, is the way the young Andersen was billed when he received his first part as "an anonymous goblin in a corps of goblins." Of this period (when he was fourteen) he wrote in the autobiography, "Shortly after this, Dahlen arranged a ballet of 'Armida,' in which I received a little part. I was a spirit. In this ballet I became acquainted with a little girl . . . and our names stood printed in the bill. That was a moment in my life, when my names was printed! I fancied I could see in it a nimbus of immortality. I was continually looking at the printed paper. I carried the programme of the ballet with me at night to bed, lay and read my name by candle-light,—in short, I was happy!"

The above excerpts from "Lucky Peer," together with the one on page 154, are partially autobiographic of that period so lightly treated in the biographies with the familiar episode of the gangling youth cavorting in his socks in an impromptu audition before the terrified Madame Schall. Only by realizing the black despair, loneliness, and humiliation that were the normal state of his mind can one appreciate what the etheriality of the foot-lights must have meant to him at that time in measureless consolation and assuagement.

ladies did. He made a treadmill out of grandmother's chair, and upset two chairs and a bolster over himself to show how the dancing-hall came down. He showed this, and he gave it with all the music that belonged to it; there was no talking in the ballet. He sang high and low, with words and without; there was no connection in it; it was just like a whole opera. The most noticeable thing, meanwhile, of all was his beautiful voice, clear as a bell, but no one spoke of that.

Peer was before to have been a grocer's boy, to mind prunes and lump sugar; now he found there was something very much finer, and that was to get into the Samson story and dance in the ballet. There were a great many poor children that went that way, said the grandmother, and became fine and honored people; still no little girl of her family should ever get permission to go that way; a boy—well, he stood more firmly.

Peer had not seen a single one of the little girls fall before the whole house fell, and then they all fell together, he said.

Peer certainly must be a ballet-dancer.

"He gives me no rest!" said his mother. At last, his grandmother promised to take him one day to the ballet-master, who was a fine gentleman, and had his own house, like the merchant. Would Peer ever get to that? Nothing is impossible for our Lord. Peer had a gold apple in his hand when he was a child. Such had lain in his hands; perhaps it was also in his legs.

Peer went to the ballet-master, and knew him at once; it was Samson himself. His eyes had not suffered at all at the hands of the Philistines. That was only a part of the play, he was told. And Sampson looked kindly and pleasantly on him, and told him to stand up straight, look right at him, show him his ankle. Peer showed his whole foot, and leg too.

"So he got a place in the ballet," said grandmother.

It was easily brought about at the ballet-master's house; but first his mother and grandmother must needs make other preparations, and talk with people who knew about these things; first with the merchant's wife, who thought it a good career for a pretty, well-formed boy without any prospect, like Peer. Then they talked with Miss Frandsen; she understood all about the ballet. At one time, in the younger days of grandmother, she had been the most favorite *danseuse* at the theatre; she had danced goddesses and princesses, had been cheered and applauded whenever she came out; but then she grew older,—we all do,—and then she no longer had principal parts; she had to dance behind the younger ones; and finally she went behind all the dancers quite into the dressing-room, where she dressed the others to be goddesses and princesses.

"So it goes" said Miss Frandsen. "The theatre road is a delightful one to travel, but it is full of thorns. Chicane grows there,—chicane!"

That was a word Peer did not understand; but he came to understand it quite well.

"He is determined to go into the ballet," said his mother.

"He is a pious Christian child, that he is," said grandmother.

"And well brought up," said Miss Frandsen. "Well bred and moral! that was I in my heyday."

And so Peer went to dancing-school, and got some summer clothes and thin-soled dancing-shoes to make it easier. All the old dancers hissed him, and said that he was a boy good enough to eat.

He was told to stand up, stick his legs out, and hold on by a post so as not to fall, while he learned to kick first with his right leg, then with his left. It was not so hard for him as for most of the others. The ballet-master clapped him on the back and said he would soon be in the ballet; he should be a king's child, who was carried on shields and wore a gold crown. That was practised at the dancing school, and rehearsed at the theatre itself.

The mother and grandmother must go to see little Peer in all his glory, and they looked, and they both cried, for all it was so splendid. Peer in all his glory and show had not seen them at all; but the merchant's family he had seen; they sat in the loge nearest the stage. Little Felix was with them in his best clothes. He wore buttoned gloves, just like grown-up gentlemen, and sat with an opera-glass at his eyes the whole evening, although he could see perfectly well—again just like grown-up gentlemen. He looked at Peer; Peer looked at him; and Peer was a king's child with a gold crown on. This evening brought the two children in closer relation to one another.

Some days after, as they met each other in the yard, Felix went up to Peer and told him he had seen him when he was a prince. He knew very well that he was not a prince any longer, but then he had worn a prince's clothes and had a gold crown on.

"I shall wear them again on Sunday," said Peer.

Felix did not see him then, but he thought about it the whole evening. He would have liked very well to be in Peer's shoes; he had not Miss Frandsen's warning that the theatre way was a thorny one, and that *chicane* grew on it; neither did Peer know this yet, but he would very soon learn it.

His young companions the dancing children were not all as good as they ought to be for all that they sometimes were angels with wings to them. There was a little girl, Malle Knallemp, who always, when she was dressed as page, and Peer was a page, stepped maliciously on the side of his foot, so as to see his stockings; there was a bad boy who always was sticking pins in his back, and one day he ate Peer's sandwiches by mistake; but that was impossible, for Peer had some meat-pie with his sandwich, and the other boy had only bread and butter. He could not have made a mistake.

It would be in vain to recite all the vexations that Peer endured in two years, and the worst was not yet—that was to come. There was a ballet to be brought out called *The Vampire*. In it the smallest dancing children were dressed as bats; wore gray tights that fitted snugly to their bodies; black gauze wings were stretched from their shoulders, and so they were to run on tiptoe, as if they were just flying, and then they were to whirl round on the floor. Peer could do this especially well; but his trousers and jacket, all of one piece, were old and worn; the threads did not hold together; so that, just as he whirled round before the eyes of all the people, there was a rip right down his back, straight from his neck down to where the legs are fastened in, and all his short, little white shirt was to be seen.

All the people laughed. Peer saw it, and knew that he was ripped all down the back; he whirled and whirled, but it grew worse and worse. Folks laughed louder and louder; the other vampires laughed with them, and whirled into him, and all the more dreadfully when the people clapped and shouted bravo!

"That is for the ripped vampire!" said the dancing children; and so they always called him "Ripperip."

Peer cried; Miss Frandsen comforted him. "'Tis only *chicane*," said she; and now Peer knew what *chicane* was.

Besides the dancing-school, they had another one attached to the theatre, where the children were taught to cipher and write, to learn history and geography; ay, they had a teacher in religion, for it is not enough to know how to dance; there is something more in the world than wearing out dancing-shoes. Here, too, Peer was quick,—the very quickest of all,—and got plenty of good marks; but his companions still called him "Ripperip." It was only a joke; but at last he would not stand it any longer, and he struck out and boxed one of the boys, so that he was black and blue under the left eye, and had to have it whitened in the evening when he was to go in the ballet. Peer was talked to sharply by the dancing-master, and more harshly by the sweeping-woman, for it was her son he had punished.

* * *

He sat down below in the garden that stretched out to the meadow. It was evening and moonlight. His cheeks burned, his blood was on fire, the air brought a grateful coolness. There over the moor a mist hung that rose and sank and made him think of the dance of the Elfin maidens. There came into his mind the old saying of the Knight Olaf, who rode out to ask the guests to his wedding, but was stopped by the Elfin maidens, who drew him into their dance and sport, and thereby came his death. It was a piece of folklore, an old poem. The moonlight and the mist over the moor painted pictures for it this evening.

Peer sat and soon was in a half dreaming state, looking out upon it all. The bushes seemed to have shapes of human sort and half of beastly form. They stood motionless, while the mist rose like a great waving veil. Something like this had Peer seen in a ballet at the theatre, when Elfin maidens were represented, whirling and waving with veils of gauze; but here it was far more charming and more wonderful. So great a scene as this no theatre could show; none had so clear an air, so shining a moonlight.

Just in front, in the mist, appeared most distinctly a female shape, and it became three, and the three many; they danced hand in hand, floating girls. The air bore them along to the hedge where Peer stood. They nodded to him; they spake; it was like the cling! clang! of silver bells. They danced into the garden and about him; they enclosed him in their circle. Without thought he danced with them, but not their dance. He whirled about, as in the memorable vampire dance, but he thought not of that, he thought not at all of aught more, but was enveloped in the wondrous beauty he saw around him.

Excerpts from "Lucky Peer"



Cookies for Ballerinas

As I sit in my room, my hostess's granddaughter, a nice little child, comes in, and is pleased to see my parti-colored carpet-bag, my Scotch plaid, and the red leather lining of the portmanteau. I directly cut out for her, from a sheet of white paper, a Turkish mosque, with minarets and open windows, and away she runs with it—so happy, so happy!

Shortly after, I heard much loud talking in the yard, and I had a presentiment that it was concerning what I had cut out; I therefore stepped softly out into the balcony, and saw the grandmother standing below, and with beaming face, holding my clipped-out paper at arm's length. A whole crowd of Dalecarlians, men and women, stood around all in artistic ecstasy over my work; but the little girl—the sweet little child—screamed, and stretched out her hands after her lawful property, which she was not permitted to keep, as it was too fine.

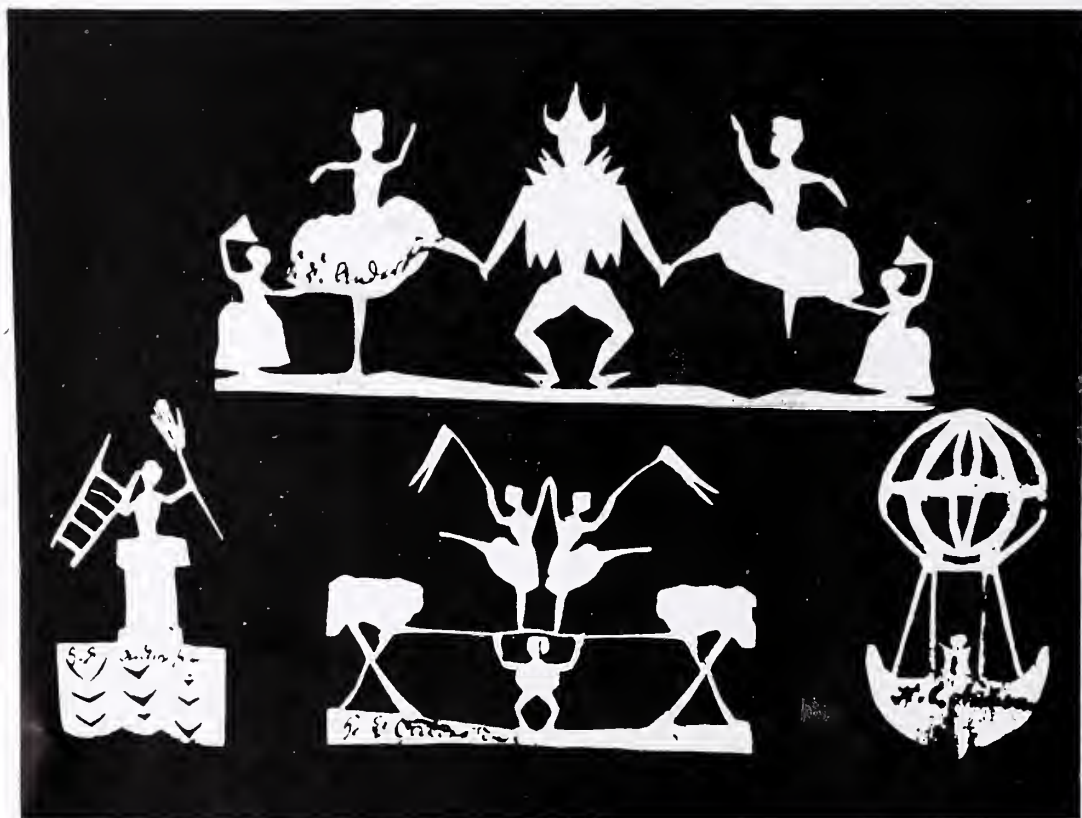
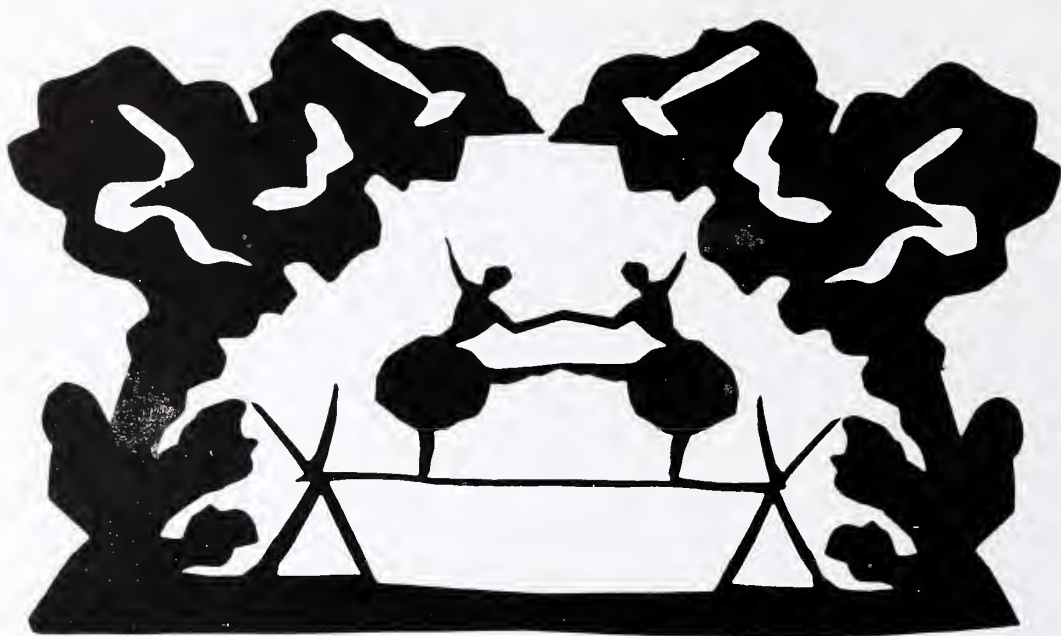
I came in again quietly, yet, of course, highly flattered and cheered; but a moment after there was a knocking at my door; it was the grandmother, my hostess, who came with a whole plate full of spice-nuts.

"I bake the best in all Dalecarlia," said she; "but they are of the old fashion, from my grandmother's time. You cut out so well, sir, should you not be able to cut me out some new fashions?"

And I sat the whole of Midsummer Night, and clipped fashions for spice-nuts. Nut-crackers with knight's boots; wind-mills which were both mill and miller—but in slippers, and with the door in the stomach; and ballet-dancers that pointed with one leg toward the seven stars. Grandmother got them, but she turned the ballet-dancers up and down; the legs went too high for her; she thought that they had one leg and three arms.

"They will be new fashions," said she; "but they are difficult."

Midsummer Festival in Leksand from "Pictures of Travel"



Paper cutouts by H. C. Andersen



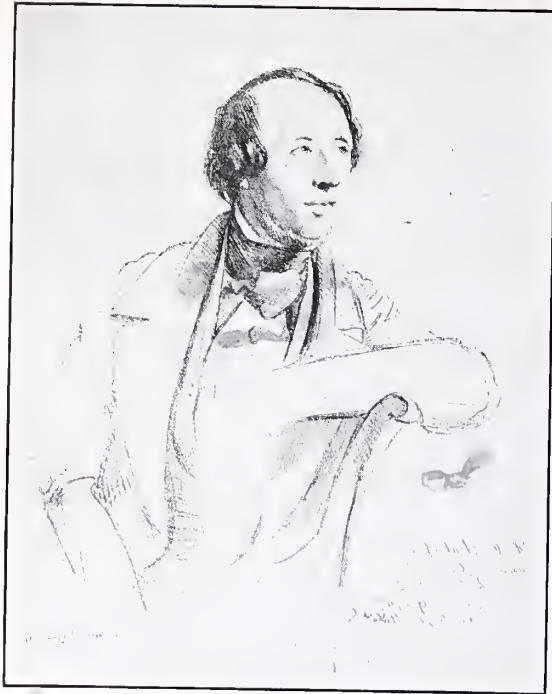
"The student knew the prettiest stories and could cut out the most amusing pictures hearts, with little ladies in them, who danced; flowers, and great castles in which one could open the doors; that was a very merry student."

Little Ida's Flowers



I could cut out the prettiest things in paper with a pair of scissors, that I could do even as a child, and in many families they still preserved my clipped papers.

H. C. A.



H. C. Andersen, 1841. Drawing by Vogel.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There must be youth, and that I found in Cerrito! It was something incomparably beautiful, it was a swallow flight in the dance, a sport of Psyche . . .

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One is put in mind of another observation of the same ballet: "One of the most effective moments with Cerito is that in which she comes on with St. Léon, executing a jeté battu in the air, and, at the same moment, turning her head suddenly to catch sight of the much desired apple."

London 1846

That was at the same representation that I saw for the first time the renowned dancer Taglioni; she danced in "La Pas des Déesses." Before she appeared I felt a throbbing of my heart, which I always have when my expectation is raised for something excellent and grand.

She appeared as an old, little sturdy, and quite pretty woman; she would have been a nice lady in a salon, but as a young goddess—*fuimus Troes!* I sat cool and indifferent at the graceful dancing of that old lady. There must be youth, and that I found in Cerrito! It was something incomparably beautiful, It was a swallow-flight in the dance, a sport of Psyche, a flight! that one did not see in Taglioni; *fuimus Troes!* The Danish dancer, Miss Grahn, was also in London, and was highly admired of all, but she had a sore foot and did not dance. One evening when "*Elisire d'Amore*" was given, she sent for me to see her in her little box, where she disclosed for me with liveliness and fun the world behind the scenes, and gave me an account of each of the actors.

Story of My Life

Gran and Grahn



We approached Gran, where Stephen the Holy was born, and where he now rests in his coffin. In the midst of the ruined fortress on the cliff a church is building. The town itself lies flat, between green trees; from these trees a number of butterflies flutter over the Danube, as if they were a bevy of sylphides, of which we only saw the wings. The thought of sylphides and the name of the town leads me back to the Sylphide of the North, who flew from the Danish scene to the world's city, Paris, and enchanted even that critical gentleman, Jules Janin; then, at once went on crutches to the baths of the Pyrenees; sank from admiration and renown to suffering and oblivion! I forget Stephen the Holy's town for Lucile—forget Gran for Grahn!

A Poet's Bazaar



Pepita de Oliva

At sixty two, after witnessing the performance of an Italian Opera Company Andersen wrote: 'It is just as well that you won't see Signora Sarolta—both Hoedt and I are smitten, but then I am twenty two.'



In "Hans Andersen, the Man" (Methuen, London, 1927) by Elith Reumert, besides many fair evaluations of his subject that offset popular misconceptions there are a few lines devoted to passing infatuations for the dancers, Lucile Grahn and Pepita. The friendship of his compatriot, Grahn, was evidently stronger than that of Pepita for Andersen speaks out in the autobiography of his displeasure at having to ride with the latter in a railway compartment. (Another Spanish danseuse, Dolores Serral, is the subject of the short opening chapter of "A Poet's Bazaar," a nostalgic musing about someone he feels certain would not remember him from their meeting in Copenhagen in 1840.)

There are indications in the Reumert book of further gleanings in the field of ballet-Diary, Letters, etc., sources that have been inaccessible in the preparation of this issue.



Grahn in the Cachuca

We are now in the middle of Paris, in the world-renowned *Palais Royal*—its colonnades inclose us. Under the thinly leaved trees sit a little knot of countrymen; they draw a parallel between the view before them and the representation of the same upon the Copenhagen theatre in vaudevilles. The reality exceeds the mere imitation. Flower-girls offer your roses; ladies with waving feathers, accompanied by the old *mama*—so she is here called—distribute their glances. Among these Danes there is one who is here for the first time—an acquaintance of ours. They all tell him what he ought to see first of all.



"Taglioni!" said one: "you should see her as Natalie and as the Sylph. That is dancing! She raises herself like a bird, and then sinks down again like a floating soap-bubble!"

"I will see every thing which is to be seen," said the newly arrived one.

* * *

There was given in the great opera this evening no one entire piece, but, as is often the case, acts from various operas. The second act of "*William Tell*" was just ended, they were at the finale of Comte d'Orly, and the second act of the ballet *La Tentation* was to follow.

The two Danes ascended the broad and commodious staircase and went through the magnificent illuminated saloon, where the glare of the light was thrown back from looking-glass covered walls, across the spacious corridor, and entered the box of the Marquis. Several elegant gentlemen, so elegant that they might have served for models of the newest fashion, stood behind the ladies, who were dressed as if for a ball. The concluding chorus resounded, the curtain fell; and now venders wandered about, and mounted to the boxes and to the pit, and cried out with loud voices, "*L'orguel du marchand! Voilà l'Entr' acte! Vert-vert! Voilà le programme! la pièce!*" The clock above the proscenium showed the hour of nine.

* * *

The curtain rolled up, and the second act, which on account of its greater magnificence has kept its place the longest, began. The scene opened in the crater; deep below, in an exhausted volcano, an immense flight of steps, the whole height of the stage, filled the background. The march resounded; and now descended many hundreds of demons in the most whimsical and fantastic of shapes. Here there was a wandering hand, a torso of demons, a rolling eye, and gray animal forms. The Sabbath now began, the kettle steamed upon the fire, and every demon threw in his gift. The steam fashioned itself as it rose to demon-like shapes, and before long a beautiful woman arose out of it, a child of the under world, who was destined to tempt the saint; an image of the most perfect beauty, as she now arose from the foam of the sea, and as sculptors have created her from marble. Thus floated Taglioni among the demons, who adorned their child and taught her the use of the senses. Like an ethereal being she floated around among the wild shapes, and the black curl which hung upon her bosom alone told of her hellish origin.

In triumph then ascended the wicked spirits with her to the upper world.

* * *

The third act now began. The demons had raised a castle—one could see through the window into the magnificent saloon; the little goblins roasted and boiled, dressed up as cooks, in the kitchen; all above danced pretty little ladies. St. Anthony now approached: overcome with hunger and fatigue he begged for a crust of dry bread and a draught of water. The cook laughed, pointed to a crucifix which stood on the road, and desired him to overturn it, and then he would invite him to dinner;



but Anthony refuses. Demons then appear in hunting-dresses on horseback before the castle, together with the woman they have made; and she also returns the same proposal with the same promises to the holy Anthony. The beautiful woman proffered to him the enjoyment of her whole splendour if he would overturn the cross. On this he knelt before the sacred symbol, whilst the wild song of the demons to the ringing of their cups resounded from the castle, and one sees the tumultuous company from the windows. The woman approached Anthony, but his address to her operates upon her like sunshine upon the poison-plant—her black lock becomes less and less. The creature of the nether world listened with intense admiration, and with human thoughts and human feelings, to the words of the saint: and whilst he kneeling embraced the cross the beautiful woman sank into the earth, and the castle, together with every thing which it contained, was hurled into the abyss, out of which red flames sprang forth.

Only these two acts of the ballet were given. "The holy man had such powerful influence over that demonian child," said Naomi, "that she also was fitted for heaven. You ought to see the conclusion of the ballet, where Anthony belongs to heaven, and conducts the dear girl to bliss. Spirits of hell, wrapped in burning sulphur clouds, occupy the lowest part of the stage; white clouds ascend, and then all is filled with angels—as if by millions one sees the kneeling groups; then the white-garmented grown-up human beings, with large white wings; then children; and behind these innumerable groups painted on the background. The lighting is so beautifully managed that the eye observes no transition from reality to the mere appearance; one seems to gaze into infinite heaven, which, as well as the clouds, ascends higher and higher, ever extending itself until the curtain falls."

"Only A. Fiddler"

Spot illustrations are CROQUADES of LA TENTATION. Concerning these DIABLERIES the following: " . . . as M. Duponchel was already very keen on the devilries in LA TENTATION (then in course of preparation) he stole some of M. Taglioni's devils (from La Sylphide) and this MAITRE DE BALLET often came to me in tears about the meanness of his hell and the few sorcerers that were left him."

Elves on the Heath



The monotonous grinding of the wheels in the sand, the piping of the wind through the branches of the trees, and the postilion's music, blended together into a sleep-bringing lullaby: one passenger after the other nodded his head. Even our nose-gays, which were stuck in the pockets of the diligence, imitated the same motion every time the vehicle gave a jolt. I closed my eyes and opened them again, in a half doze, and certainly dreamt. My eye fell in particular on one of

the large carnations in the bouquet I had got in Vierlande: all the flowers had a powerful scent, but I thought that mine surpassed all the others, both in scent and color; what was most curious, in the centre of the flower there sat a little airy being, not bigger than one of its leaves, and as transparent as glass; it was its genius, for in every flower there dwells such a little spirit, which lives and dies with it. His wings were of the same color as the leaves of the carnation, but they were so fine that they looked as if the hue were but the red tint that fell from the flower in the moonlight: golden locks, finer than the seed-dust, glided down over his shoulders and waved in the wind.

As I looked more closely at the other flowers. I observed that he was not the only one: such a little being rocked in every flower—its wings and airy dress were as a tinge of the flower in which it lived. They each rocked on the light leaf, in fragrance and moonlight; each sang and laughed; but it was as when the wind passes gently over the attuned Æolian harp.

Illustration from Marie's Scrapbook by H. C. Andersen.

There soon came hundreds and hundreds of elves, in quite different habits and forms, through the open window of the diligence; they came from the dark pine-trees and heath-blossoms. What a chattering there was, and such rocking and dancing! They often sprang right over my nose, and were not ashamed to perform a circular dance on my brow. These pine-elves looked like real wild men, with lance and spear, and yet they were as airy as the fine mist which, in the morning sun, exhales its fragrance from the bedewed rose.

* * *

I looked out on the great Lyneborg heath, which is said to be so ugly. Good Heavens! how people talk!—yes, they talk as they see and hear. Every grain of sand was a glittering rock: the long grass-straw, full of dust, that hung out on the broad high-road, was the prettiest macadamized way one can imagine for the little elves; such a little smiling face peeped forth from every leaf! The pines looked like completed towers of Babel, with myriads of elves from the lowest broad branch to the very top. The whole air was filled with the strangest figures, and all clear and quick as light. Four or five flower-genii rode on a white butterfly they had driven out of its sleep; whilst others built palaces of the strong fragrance and the fine moonbeams. The whole of that great heath was an enchanted world, full of miracles. With what art was not every flower's leaf woven; What a mass of life lay in the green pine-shoot! Every grain of sand had its different color and peculiar combination; and what infinity in the expansive firmament above!

* * *

The dew began to fall: I saw the air-light genii sporting about on the large dew-drops. Many poets say that the elves bathe themselves in dew; but how can that light being which dances on the thistle-down without moving it, cleave its way through the solid mass of water? No; they stood upon the round drop, and when it rolled under their feet, and the light drapery fluttered in the air, they looked like the most charming miniature pictures of Fortune on her rolling ball.

In the Hartz Mountains from "Pictures of Travel"

The Tempest

Ariel's first appearance was highly poetical; when Prospero summons him, a shooting-star falls from heaven and touches the grass; it burns with blue and green flames, and then one suddenly sees Ariel's beautiful angelic form; he stood clad in white, with wings from his shoulder reaching to the ground; he appeared to have come with the shooting-star. Every revelation of Ariel was different, and always beautiful. He would appear suddenly, hanging by the hand, in a garland of vine leaves; then he would float over the stage by means of a mechanism which it was not possible to discover; there was no string or iron bar to be seen; and yet there was some such thing below that sustained him in his flying position. In one of the acts there was seen a desert, wintry place, that, as the sun's rays became more and more strong, was transformed little by little to the most luxuriant nature. Trees shot up, flowered, and bore fruit; springs bubbled up and down by a great waterfall nymphs were dancing, lightly as swan's down upon the water. In a succeeding act, Olympus shone with all its forms of beauty; the whole background was an airy place, filled with floating gods and goddesses. Juno drove by in her chariot drawn by peacocks whose tails glittered in the sunshine. The signs of the zodiac were displayed: the whole was a fantastic kaleidoscope. The splendor and excitement of a single act was enough to have drawn a full house for the most insignificant piece, and here it was lavished on all the acts of one of Shakespeare's works—it was really quite too much; aye, one sailed with the lovers in the gliding boat, and saw their thoughts at work! The entire background was in motion; landscape, a moving panorama.

The closing scene in the "Tempest" was undeniably the one which produced the greatest effect. The entire stage represented a broad sea that was stirred by the wind. Prospero, who leaves his

island, stood in the stern of the ship that came sailing down from the background to the footlights; the sails swelled, and after the final epilogue had been spoken, the ship glided down one of the side scenes, and now floating over the water appeared Ariel nodding farewell. The whole light fell upon him with the effect that he seemed under the electric light to be the one that, as a meteor, gave the whole stage its brilliancy; a pretty rain-bow was seen over the water, the moon became only a faint ball of fire against the sunlight and the rainbow glory which Ariel caused to stream forth at the moment of his departure.

It was surpassingly fine. The public was enthusiastic through the long acts and the representation, which stretched out indefinitely. The first evening people sat from seven in the evening till half past twelve. Everything was done which machinery and mounting of the piece could give, and yet after one had seen the whole, one felt worn out, tired, and dull. Shakespeare himself was changed. His work was petrified in illustrations; the living word evaporated, there was nothing of the spiritual nature left, all was forgotten for the gold dish that was carried out.

London (undated) "Pictures of Travel"

Oberon



In the evening I went to the Opera-house, where Weber's opera, "Oberon," was performed, and right glad I was, and though I only got a spare seat, I was yet one of the first. Here it was that I was to have a proper idea of an opera—to see the scenery and decorations treated as an art by themselves, and what machinery can be. The overture was received with *da capo*, the curtain rolled up, and whilst the overture was repeated I had an opportunity of regarding the splendid decorations and the charming groups. *Oberon* did not lie, as with us, in a solid bed: the whole airy hall was overgrown with lilies, and he lay in the rocking cup of



one of them. Round about in the other lilies stood smiling genii, whilst the larger ones hovered about in a light and airy dance. Every decoration was thus a work of art, as also the arrangement of the whole; but the machinery—*mirable dictu!*—the machinery was, in proportion to the means, bad. I call it bad, when the clouds remain stationary half-way, so that the genii must help to slide them on; when in the otherwise magnificent sea-decoration in the second act, where the air was so deceptively true, one could see into the lofts over the air curtains if one sat on the second bench in the pit opposite to it. The whole airy scenery was charming here—one saw the stars peep gradually forth: if the ceiling had not come forward at the same time, it would have been beautiful. The changes were also managed rather clumsily; and in the Sea of Astrachan we saw a scene-shifter pass over the surface of the water, which surprised me much, although I knew that experiment at home. I was, however, told it had never been managed so awkwardly as on that evening—that the machinery here was a real work of art; we must, therefore, regard it as a misfortune that evening, yet I cannot refrain from mentioning it.

Berlin (undated) "Pictures of Travel"

Contemporary colored woodcuts of the production of *Oberon*.



Negative of lithograph by S. M. Joy of Grahm in the ballet of "The Dryad."

Bal Mabille (1867)

(The great exhibition at Paris had just opened. People from all lands were streaming to it. Fata Morgana's castle had been reared on the Champs de Mars, which had been translated into the most beautiful garden. I must go there and see the fairy tale of our time. . . .

"I was in Mabille for the first time the next evening. I never before had been there. It was finely illuminated, and lights hung on the weeping-willows over the little ponds, while the moon shone softly, and there was a multitude of people. . . . One of my young friends swung a Mabille beauty toward me and asked, "What do you say to such poetry as this?" I pointed to the moon which shone in all its glory, "I think that everlasting sight is better." . . . I stayed a quarter of an hour, and have in "The Dryad" given the impression of what I felt and saw.)"

"The Story of My Life"

The Dryad sat at the foot of the tree, at the door of her house, which she had locked, and the key of which she had thrown away. She was so young, so beautiful! the stars saw her and glistened; the gaslamps saw her and blazed and flashed! She was slender, and yet strong—a child, and yet a woman.

Her garment was silky and fine, and green as the newly-unfolded tender leaves of the tree; in her nut-brown hair was a half-blown chestnut-flower. She looked like the goddess of spring.

For a moment she sat motionless; then she sprang up, and sped from the place as swift as a gazelle, and disappeared round the corner. She ran, she danced like the light from a mirror carried in the sunshine, which every moment flashes to and fro; and if one had observed her closely one might have noticed a marvellous thing: at each place where she dwelt a moment her garment and her form changed, according to the peculiarity of the house or place the light of which shone upon her.

She reached the Boulevards; a sea of light streamed from the jets of gas in lamps, shops, and cafés. Young and slender trees stood here in rows; each hid its Dryad from the beams of the artificial sunlight. The endless long pavement seemed one immense drawing-room; tables stood spread with every kind of refreshment, from champagne and chartreuse down to coffee and beer. There was a display of flowers, pictures, statues, and gay articles. From the throng under the tall houses she looked timidly across at the alarming stream beyond the rows of trees; she saw surging there a tide of rolling carriages, cabriolets, coaches, omnibuses, and cabs; gentlemen on horseback and regiments parading—it was risking life and limb to cross over to the other side. Now blue lights blazed, then gaslights glared; suddenly a rocket shot into the air. Whence came it? whither did it go?

Certainly this was the high road of the great city of the world.

Here sounded soft Italian melodies, here Spanish songs, accompanied by castenets; but louder, and swelling above all, rang the music-box tunes of the day, the exciting can-can music, unknown to Orpheus, and never heard by the fair Helen. Even a wheelbarrow might have danced to it on one wheel. The Dryad danced, floated, flew, changing colour like the honey-bird in the sunshine.



Bal Mabille

* * * * *

She saw a shining gate opening into a little garden, filled with light and dancing melodies. The jets of gas gleamed like borders round small, calm pools, and lakes where artificial water-plants glittered in the resplendence of light, throwing jets of water on high from their chalices. Beautiful weeping willows, springs, real weeping willows, drooped their fresh branches like a green veil, transparent and yet concealing. Here, between the bushes, blazed a fire; its red lustre shone into small, half-dark groves undulating with tones: a music thrilling, luring and fascinating—sending the blood dancing through the veins.

The Dryad saw women, young and beautiful, in festal attire, with trusting smile and the light laughing mind of youth: "Maries" with roses in their hair, but without carriage and groom. How they floated, how they whirled in this wild dance, up and down! As if stung by the tarantella, they sprang, and laughed, overflowing with delight, ready to embrace the world.

The Dryad felt herself carried away in the dance. Close to her little foot fitted the silken boot, brown as the chestnut, and as the ribbons which fluttered from her hair over her uncovered shoulders. Her green silky garment waved in ample folds round her finely moulded form, but did not hide her pretty foot, which seemed to trace fairy rings before her young partner. Was she in the enchanted garden of Armida? What was the name of this place? In blazing jets the gas flames outside said,—*Mabille*.

The sounds of music, clapping of hands, rockets, murmuring waters, and the popping of champagne corks mingled there. The dancing was bacchanalian wild; and above it all sailed the moon, with a rather wry face, no doubt. The sky was cloudless, clear, and serene: it seemed as if one could look straight into heaven.

The Dryad

Romantic Ballet in Denmark

The theatre "Nächst dem Kärnthner Thor," has, besides the opera, a ballet; but though there is a large stage here, with plenty of pomp and show, yet the ballet department will not bear any comparison with that of the Copenhagen Theatre, which, at this time (ca. 1845) stands very high, and our ballets surpass in taste and poetry all those I have had an opportunity of seeing in Germany and Italy. Paris and Naples, without doubt, excel us in the number of their dancers, and in their splendid decorations, but not in composition.

When the Italian Galeotti died in Denmark, Terpsichore wept. Who was there that could supply his place as ballet composer? No one took his place; but a new one was born, who, like every true genius, made his own way—and that is Bournonville.*

Vienna's Theatres. A Poet's Bazaar

* Andersen further noted after a production of "*Biche en Bois*" (Paris 1867)—"The ballet was, in respect to composition and beauty, far below what the Danish stage has." From these few lines alone it would seem that the Romantic Ballet in Denmark is especially deserving of its share of restored glory that research is bringing to the Romantic Ballet in general.

In an article appearing a few years ago in an American dance magazine the author confessed to disappointment "after pouring through many libraries trying to find definite historical information on the development of the ballet in Denmark" and crediting Bournonville as its first ballet master from "first-hand" information from a leading dancer of that country. This came to mind upon encountering in New York City, publicly available, at least two volumes in the native tongue on this subject, one of which, replete with illustrations, deals in scholarly fashion with it from its origins to the date of publication in 1922. Permission from the publishers forthcoming a translation, complete or in part, "*Den Danske Ballets Historie*, (Hjemmets Forlag, Gutenberghus-København) by Elith Poul Poussaing Reumert would be a labor of love of which the Danish Ballet is fully worthy.

Little Christian at the Ballet

"This evening we will go to the play," said Peter Vieck, and took good little Christian by the hand.

A peasant who had never been in a theatre before was once taken to see a play; when he entered the vestibule he went straight up to the check-taker's box, thrust his head through the little opening, and remained standing there in the expectation that this was the place in which he should see the play. The same thing might have happened to Christian, for never in his life had he seen a theatre. All was new to him—the sentinels in the vestibule, as well as the crowd of people who ascended the stairs.

"Now thou shalt see a little box; we will soon sit in the middle of it," said Peter Vieck. "They will stick us in the upper drawer. See, the under ones are a little drawn out, so that the ladies may not spoil their grandeur?"

They took their places on the first bench, Christian was in a solemn mood; the whole seemed to him like a great church.

"Those laced beds there, on either side, are for the king and queen," said Peter Vieck. "That painted sheet there, in front, goes up into the air like a ship's sail; and then the ladies come forth and stretch out their legs, first this one, then that one, like flies upon a dish of milk."

The lamps threw their bright light upon the gilt boxes, in which sat the richly dressed ladies. And now entered the king and the whole court; Christian felt alarmed, and yet was highly delighted: he was then in the very same house in which the king was; he had only to call out loudly and the king would hear, and certainly ask, "Who calls?"

Now all was quite silent, when suddenly there burst forth an ocean of music. The representation commenced, and he heard such singing as he never heard before. Tears started to his eyes; he suppressed them, for people would certainly laugh at him did they see him crying. The joys of heaven could not be greater than always sitting here, thought he; and yet the piece that was given was somewhat wearisome, said the others. But now came the best at the end, the splendid ballet of "Bluebeard."

The music sounded like human voices—yes, like all living nature. He fancied he again heard the storm at St. Regissa's well, when the trees bent like reeds and the leaves whirled about. He heard the wind as it rushes through the rigging and masts, but melodiously beautiful, far more beautiful than his godfather's playing; and yet this music reminded Christian of him.

The curtain rose, and Bluebeard's seven murdered wives floated in their white garments over the couch of their murderer. The music expressed the passionate language of the dead; his imagination followed the whole romantic poem. The happy children who danced before Isaura! Were he only among them! A more beautiful fate than that of these little ones he could not imagine upon earth. Oh, might he only shout his wishes, his love of music, to the king, the gracious gentleman would assist him! But he did not dare to do this. Theatrical life seemed to him a magical picture of happiness and excellence, and many other people dream the same as he.

At Paris, in the ballet "*Le Diable Boiteux*," one sees the opposite of that which the spectator is accustomed to see. One is placed in the scene itself, and gazes from thence upon an imaginary theatre; the scenes turn their unpainted sides towards one, the up-rolled background is the curtain, and one sees the rows of spectators who applaud and hiss. The dancers turn their backs upon the public. By this representation one is transported behind the scenes; could we only gaze as easily into the human hearts which there beat, what a shadow-world of passions and tears would be revealed! This host of dancing women know in their homes nothing but poverty. In the chorus of singers is one who might take the first place on the stage; but the directors do not know how to value him, and the manager cannot endure him. In the theatrical state one lives under the dominion of the thirty tyrants. A badly paid artist has full right to a ticket for food, gratis, from the institution for the relief of the poor. The poet receives no pension, in order that the recollection of the naked present may keep him in a fit tragical mood.

* * *

Only too soon ended that glorious and splendid spectacle, and now all hastened forth, as though they had been endeavouring to escape from something unpleasant.

* * *

Long did the music sound in Christian's ears, the whole representation stood livingly before his eyes. Thus do we long gaze at the glory of a star when daylight has driven it away. Now he felt that there was something higher, something nobler than the mere occupations of everyday life; his intellectual being, his genius had been awoke, and strove after development. He had a feeling of the pearl which lay concealed in his soul, the holy pearl of art; but he knew not yet that it, like the ocean pearl, must await the diver, who will bring it forth to day, or must cling fast to the muscles or oyster, in order by means of these high patrons to attain observation. *Excerpts from only a Fiddler*



*Theatre of Hans Christian Andersen **

"Once upon a time a little boy sat in the back room of a shoemaker's shop and cut into royal robes, for puppet kings and queens and fairies, bits of bright coloured rags that he had collected from heaven knows where. And, when his puppets were dressed, he placed them upon a stage of his own making, where they enacted plays of the boy's imagination,—plays, perhaps, that were to be the stories that would, in future years, delight the world over."

A theatre in this spirit, its proscenium and decor already made to order tucked away in the maze of one of his fairyland paper worlds, a **ballet blanc** setting giving a rich and vivid imagery to the introduction of the bright and solid colours that bespeak the childhood world of another day. The stage is proportioned like a shadow-box and as full of magic surprises as the tinder-box of the Tales. Sometimes the footlights yield to the silver screen

* Title and scenario copyright 1945 by Joseph Cornell.





in animated cartoon, black and white or Technicolor, this latter tempered by the mellow charm of the colours of the magic lantern. Again, the stage is sometimes a coloured transparency of the stereoscope come to life. There is nothing old fashioned about the mounting of these effects—it is the original "hand-made" charm of the Romantic theater.

As the house-lights are extinguished the orchestra begins the overture to Schubert's "Rosamunde." Halfway through the footlights go up gradually to reveal in a half-light the silhouetted stage, its curtains drawn and before which are poised a pair of ballerinas entirely clothed in black. The overture ended a brief fanfare is sounded and its stirring strains bring the ballerinas into action. After a few graceful gestures a hand of each meet at the center of the curtains which they draw aside disappearing into the shadows. At the end of each scene this action is reversed the ballerinas becoming immobile again as when first seen. The various sequences will be generally introduced and ended this way. Music adapted for the most part from Schubert.

1.

The first picture that comes to life is a fragment from "The Ugly Duckling," a serene pastorelle in soft colours of floating swans. Sound effect of leaves rustled by the breezes. Music like Ravel's "Introduction and Allegro" for strings, bathed in morning light. This brief introductory idyll dissolves into——

2.

THUMBELINA

Various scenes, afternoon to evening. Pantomime and dances with the mole, insect, etc. Additional effects of cinema fantasy as the little heroine is pulled along the water on a leaf by the butterfly, the homeward flight on the swallow, etc. Music like Roussel's "Le Festin de l'Araignee." Dissolving into——

3.

THE NIGHTINGALE

Night. Close-up of the nightingale amongst foliage drenched in moonlight pouring forth his song. Dissolving into——

4.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Another night scene. The Shadow Dance from *ONDINE*, the ballet created by Fanny Cerrito a hundred years ago, which was based vaguely upon the Andersen tale. Recreated from contemporary records.

5.

THE CONSTANT TIN SOLDIER

Curtains drawn by the silhouette ballerinas for change of scene. Before the cardboard castle. Little trees arranged around a mirror laid flat for a lake upon which swim waxen white swans. The little Lady who is a dancer makes her entrance from the door of the castle, her costume taken from the Tale, "a dress of the whitest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders that looked like a scarf; and in the middle of this ribbon . . . a shining tinsel rose as big as her whole face." The action begins "at evening . . . when the toys play at 'visiting' and 'giving balls.' The Tin Soldier stands erect his eyes fastened on the dancer" straight up on the point of one of her toes. As the clock strikes twelve the black goblin springs out of the snuff-box and the hurly-burly comes to an end. In the silence that settles over the room the dancer and the Tin Soldier come to life, perform a pas de deux,

then resume their original positions. The scene shifts up to a mantelpiece where repose the statuettes of—

6.

THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY- SWEEP

Part of the carved clothes-press at one side. The sweep is entirely in black (a ladder slung over his back) his costume in striking contrast to the delicate Dresden China colours of the Shepherdess. To the strains of an old music-box the porcelain figures come to life and dance a pas de deux while the old Chinese glowers. The sweep leads the shepherdess off—fade out into a backdrop representing the night skies gleaming with stars. In the foreground the black silhouettes of gothic roof-tops. The sweep and the shepherdess emerge from a chimney and to exalted music continue their dance. An offstage crash denoting the fall of the Chinese porcelain changes the mood of despair which is reflected in their dance.

7.

THE WILD SWANS

Cinema treatment. The countryside as seen from above by Eliza.

8.

THE TINDER BOX

The soldier and the dog with "eyes as big as teacups." A grotesquerie by the soldier.

9.

THE COURT CARDS

A pack of cards comes to life for a frolic reminiscent of the many charming things of this kind done in the earliest French trick and magic films, notably by Méliès.

10.

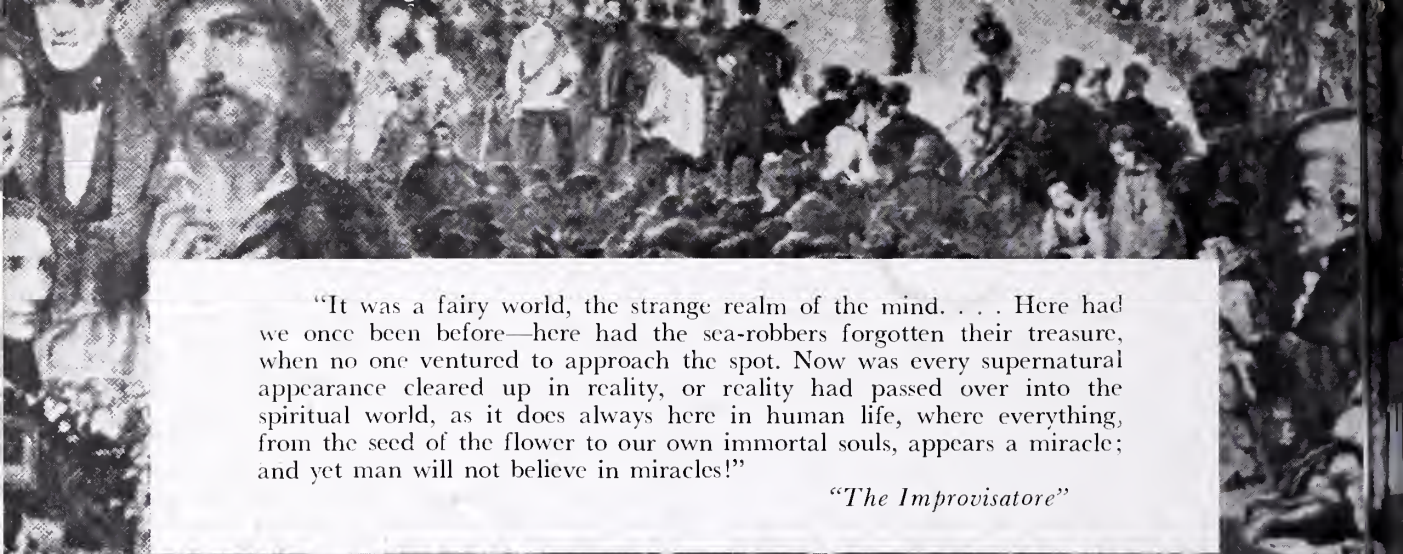
THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

Before a shop window with the snow falling pantomime by the waif in tatters window shopping, etc. As she sinks exhausted into a corner the lights in the window become dim and the visions appear.

11.


Tableau—finale of all the characters.





"It was a fairy world, the strange realm of the mind. . . . Here had we once been before—here had the sea-robbers forgotten their treasure, when no one ventured to approach the spot. Now was every supernatural appearance cleared up in reality, or reality had passed over into the spiritual world, as it does always here in human life, where everything, from the seed of the flower to our own immortal souls, appears a miracle; and yet man will not believe in miracles!"

"The Improvisatore"



* * The mists rose higher and higher between the dark mountains, the clouds assumed strange forms as they hurried on. There, thought I, there, in that wide circle grows the enchanted flower, the "Wunderblume," of the dwellers on the Hartz, which many a childish heart in its simplicity still seeks. Only one found it, but he himself knew it not before it was lost. I did not seek it here; I felt it growing in my heart; angels had sown the seed there when I still slumbered in the cradle—it grew, it extended its magic fragrance; *fancy*, this life's glorious flower, unfolded itself more in my heart, and I heard and saw a new and greater nature around me.

"Picture of Travel"

